

SENDING FORTH

Creator God,
whose Spirit moved over the face of the waters,
who gathers the seas into their places
and directs the courses of the rivers,
who sends rain upon the Earth
that it should bring forth life:
we praise you for the gift of water.

Redeemer God,
who spared Noah and creatures of every kind
from the waters of the flood,
who led your people over dry land through the sea
and across the Jordan to the land of promise,
who marks our adoption as children
with the sign of water:
we thank you for the gift of water.

Sustaining God,
create in us such a sense of wonder and delight
in this and all your gifts,
*that we might receive them with gratitude,
care for them with love
and generously share them with all your creatures,
to the honor and glory of your holy name.*
Litany by the Rev. John Paarlberg

For more information on water issues and how you can help protect
God's creation visit the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program
website at www.nccecojustice.org | 202-544-2350.

Eco-Justice Programs
National Council of Churches
110 Maryland Ave., NE, Suite 108
Washington, DC 20002



“For I Was Thirsty...”

For the Christian community, water is symbolic of our relationship with God, carrying the image of renewal, promise, and hope. It is through water that we are baptized into the community of the church. Furthermore, water is essential to all life on Earth, and it links human life to the rest of God's Creation. Creation begins with the God calling life out of the water (Genesis 1:2). The human body, in fact, is made of mostly water. We can go for weeks without food, but only a few days without water brings death. It is through water that all of Creation is gifted with life, and life, in all of its forms, is not possible without water.

The protection of water for use by the rest of Creation, future generations, and those living in poverty is the responsibility of all of God's people. As a gift of God, our response is to share the gift with all, and this involves caring for our neighbors and for all of life in order to ensure that, as a matter of justice, nobody is denied water. But we are not doing this. More than 1 billion people in the world still lack clean drinking water, and 2.6 billion lack access to adequate sanitation. Unsafe water, poor sanitation, and hygiene—cause 80 percent of the sickness in developing countries and the deaths of 5,000 children a day.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and Earth.

Ascribe to the Lord, O heavenly beings,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory that is due the holy name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is over the waters;
*the God of glory thunders,
the Lord, over the mighty waters.*

From Psalm 29

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord, my God, you are very great.

*You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow between the hills,
giving drink to every wild animal;
the wild asses quench their thirst.*

By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation;
they sing among the branches.

*From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.*

From Psalm 104: 1, 10-13

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come."

And let everyone who hears say, "Come."

And let everyone who is thirsty come.

*Let anyone who wishes
take the water of life as a gift.*

Revelation 22:17

LITANY OF CONFESSION

God of sea and sky, may we recognize you within the elements of your
created world and be grateful

O lord, grant us wisdom and gratitude

Exposed by the brightness of your Glory, the exuberance of your
creative Spirit, our lives can look so barren, so shallow.

Creator God, create a right spirit within us.

Exposed by the inclusiveness of your love, which exists for all people
and to reconcile the brokenness of all Creation, our lives feel so
separate, and alone.

O God, teach us how to love.

Exposed by the humility of your Son, who came to earth as servant,
washing feet rather than basking in richness, our selfishness is evident.

God of all, help us to serve.

Creator God, Loving God, God of all, we stand here today exposed
and vulnerable.

*Forgive us when we fall short of your expectations. Forgive us for
our lack of love. Forgive us those times when through pride we fail
to serve.*

(Adapted from liturgy by John Birch)

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

You who turn storms into gentle winds,
and troubled seas into tranquil waters,

You who make yams grow
and bananas blossom,

Wash our people with justice;
teach us with righteousness;

Speak to us daily;

strengthen us to serve you.

From Papua New Guinea